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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/789,543	02/27/2004	Leo F. Schwab	GP-304148	9451

7590

04/04/2006

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EXAMINER

KENNEDY, JOSHUA T

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3679

DATE MAILED: 04/04/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/789,543	Applicant(s) SCHWAB, LEO F.	
	Examiner Joshua T. Kennedy	Art Unit 3679	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 February 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5, 7-14 and 16-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5, 7-14 and 16-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claims 1-5, 7-14, and 16-20 have been examined.

Claims 6 and 15 have been cancelled.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 8-14, 17, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 8-14, 17, and 20 recite the limitation "the device" in the Line 1 of each respective claim. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. It is not clear as to what is being claimed in these dependent claims. For this office action only, Examiner will presume "the device" to refer to the assembly.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

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Claims 1-3 and 7-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ville et al (USPN 4,543,074).

As to Claims 1 and 7. Ville et al disclose a device for releasably fastening a first component (1) to a second component (2), comprising:

a first component (1);

a second component (2);

a device body (14);

a first fastener (1a) extending from said device body and operable to attach said device body to the first component (Fig 1);

a second fastener (2a) extending from said device body and adapted to attach said device to the second component (Fig 1),

whereby when a force of greater than a predetermined amount is applied to the second component, said first fastener detaches from the first component without damaging the first component (Fig 3; Col 5, Lines 44-47), and

whereby when a force of less than a predetermined amount is applied to the second component, said first fastener remains attached to the first component (11; Fig 1).

As to Claims 2 and 8. Ville et al disclose the device body (14) including an upper arm (Examiner considers the left portion of the device body to be the upper arm) and a lower

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arm (Examiner considers the right portion of the device body to be the upper arm) connected by an intermediate arm (19).

As to Claim 3 and 9. Ville et al disclose the first fastener (1a) being a flange defining a channel (12) between said flange and said upper arm (Fig 1).

Claims 1-4, 7-10, 14, and 16-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Roof et al (USPN 5,101,540).

As to Claims 1 and 7. Roof et al disclose a device for releasably fastening a first component (22) to a second component (16), comprising:

- a first component (22);

- a second component (16);

- a device body (18);

- a first fastener (40) extending from said device body and operable to attach said device body to the first component (Fig 6);

- a second fastener (52) extending from said device body and adapted to attach said device to the second component (Fig 6),

whereby when a force of greater than a predetermined amount is applied to the second component, said first fastener detaches from the first component without damaging the first component (No patentable weight has been given to statements of

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the use of a device. Claims 1 and 7 are based solely upon the device, not how it is to be used. There is no particular structure claimed to define how this operation is to be performed; Though no weight has been given to this limitation, it is noted that since the 2 components are not permanently secured to the device it is possible to apply a certain force to the second component to dislodge the first fastener from the first component without damaging the first component), and

whereby when a force of less than a predetermined amount is applied to the second component, said first fastener remains attached to the first component.

As to Claims 2 and 8. Roof et al disclose the device body (18) including an upper arm (42) and a lower arm (50) connected by an intermediate arm (38),

As to Claim 3 and 9. Roof et al disclose the first fastener (1a) being a return flange (40) defining a channel (Examiner considers the channel to be defined by the v-shaped area formed by surrounding walls 40 and 42) between said return flange and said upper arm (42).

As to Claims 4 and 10. Roof et al disclose a second fastener being an attachment arm (52) extending from said intermediate arm (38) and defining a channel (Examiner considers to be defined by the inside walls of the attachment arm (52) and the bottom wall of the intermediate arm (38)) between said intermediate arm and said lower arm.

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As to Claims 14 and 20. Roof et al disclose the first component being a lamp assembly (22) and the second component being a bumper fascia (Examiner interprets fascia as a panel).

As to Claim 16. Roof et al disclose a projection (56, 58) extending outwardly from said intermediate arm, said projection operable to provide a surface to allow for manually removing said fascia from said device body (Col 4, Lines 47-57).

As to Claim 17. Roof et al disclose said lamp assembly including a housing (22) and a lamp lens (26); and

the device including a finger (36) extending from said housing that engages with an end (44) of said device body, said end of said device body overlapping said finger by a distance and Including a radius formed thereon (Fig 2).

As to Claims 18 and 19. The limitation of varying a predetermined force being applied to said fascia to detach said first fastener from said lamp assembly has been given limited patentable weight since there is no structure claimed in Claims 18 and 19 and the claim is drawn to the use of a device.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 12 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Roof et al.

Roof et al disclose the device significantly as claimed, however do not disclose the first component being a head lamp or a tail lamp assembly. Per Applicant's disclosure (Paragraph 2) the connection of fascia to a headlamp or tail lamp is well known within the art, therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use the clip of Roof et al to secure the panel to a headlamp or a tail lamp to control the dimensional variation between the fascia and the lamp assembly.

Claims 5 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Roof et al as applied to claims 1-4, 7-10, 14, and 16-20 above, and further in view of Schneider et al (US 5,363,537).

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Roof et al disclose said device body significantly as claimed but do not disclose the device body being constructed of a one of an acetyl material, a polypropylene material, and a plastic material.

Schneider et al disclose a similar vehicle retaining clip (or device body) "made of a springy or resilient material, preferably metal such as steel or plastic, which when deformed exerts forces in the opposite direction, tending to return the clip to its original shape" (Col 4, Lines 22-25). As a commercially available inexpensive plastic, acetyl and polypropylene, along with steel are well known materials for use in this art and it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to select a plastic material such as polypropylene or an acetyl material to be used because the selection of a known material based upon its suitability for the intended use has long been deemed to be a design consideration within the skill of the art. In re Leshin, 227 F.2d 197, 125 USPQ 416 (CCPA 1960).

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-5, 7-14, and 16-20 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

It is noted, however, that it is unclear to Examiner what constitutes a "bumper fascia" since no structure of this is set forth by Applicant in the claims. Applicant is relying on the specification to read limitations into the claim. Since there is no structure recited, Examiner interprets fascia as a panel.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

US 5,363,537 to Schneider et al and US 6,061,882 to Otte-Weise cited to show a similar plastic clamping/ clip device having multiple attachment elements.

US 5,740,640 to Yasuda and US 5,702,148 to Vaughan cited to show similar clips used for door molding in automobiles having multiple attachment elements.

US 6,502,974 to Chase et al, US 6,698,808 to Burkhardt et al, US 6,164,807 to Gerstner, US 5,448,454 to Nonaka, and US 5,975,729 to Dobler all cited to show similar lamp assemblies.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Joshua T. Kennedy whose telephone number is (571) 272-8297. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F: 7am - 3:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel P. Stodola can be reached on (571) 272-7087. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

JTK
3/23/2006

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel P. Stodola". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'D'.

DANIEL P. STODOLA
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600